

**Policy and Procedures
Topsfield Town Website Content
TOPSFIELD-MA.GOV**

POLICY

Responsibility

Design, graphics, placement of content, hyperlinks and functionality on the website is at the discretion of the Website Committee which shall have final authority. Appeals to the decision of the Committee may be made to the Board of Selectmen, which may return the decision to the Committee for revision.

Content and Links

Content on the website shall include information about:

- Town government – information concerning the operations, descriptions, meetings, events, activities and similar information about Town boards and committees.
- News of current interest concerning issues affecting Topsfield residents.
- Topsfield community non-profit organizations and events provided that they are for the primary benefit of Topsfield residents.

No advertising or links to commercial sites shall be placed on the site.

PROCEDURES

Town Government Descriptions

The Website committee will accept only descriptions that have been approved by the group concerned and that are submitted by the group's chairman or official designee.

The descriptions should include the following information:

- How the department, board or committee fits into Town government, (i.e. to whom does the group report, whether it is elected or appointed, etc.).
- The mission, statutory responsibilities and goals of the group.
- A brief but complete listing of what the group does to accomplish its purpose. More detailed material can be included in related pages accessible through links if appropriate.
- Members and Chairman. (Only members who have been sworn in at the Town Clerk's office will be listed.)

- Contact information.
- Information about applications and procedures for permits, fees and the like.
- Bylaws / Rules and Regulations. Selected documents will be available in .pdf format. Groups posting this information are responsible for providing the most current version to the Town Clerk in electronic format. The Web Site Committee will convert Microsoft Word document into .pdf format. A disclaimer will notify the public that the “legal” version of all Bylaws / Rules and Regulations are available at the Town Clerk’s office.
- Links – Links to other Town groups, pages on the website, or outside official sites within the website policy are welcome. For the last, please provide the complete internet address.

PDF files – Application forms, reports, or any other documents associated with the group must be converted to .pdf files for downloading and printing.

Town Government News and Calendars

Announcements – Both the Home Page and the Calendar/News pages have space for announcements about Topsfield. These pages should contain recent information, so news, projects, and announcements are most welcome. Information should be sent to the Community@topsfield-ma.gov. To post notices on the Community Events Calendar, forms which must be filled out are available at the Topsfield Town Hall or by calling the Cable Office at 978-887-1544. Completed forms can be dropped off or mailed to the Town Hall or faxed to 978-887-1502. Forms must be received at least one week before the start date. This same form can be used to post notices on the Cable TV Channel 10 Community Bulletin Board.

Meeting Schedules, Agendas and Minutes - The Town Government Calendar includes the posted meetings of all Town boards and committees. The Town Clerk updates the Town Calendar regularly as she posts meetings. All groups should inform the Clerk of cancellations so that they can be included on the website calendar. Agendas and minutes can be added at the discretion of committees so that citizens will know what will be and what was discussed. For examples, please click on entries in the Calendar for the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board meetings. Agendas and minutes are also accessible through the pages dedicated to the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board. The Town Website Committee converts agendas and minutes to PDF format before they are put on the website. Contact (community@topsfield-ma.gov) if your group wants to post agendas or minutes. Please e-mail agendas and minutes to community@topsfield-ma.gov for conversion and posting.

Services and Community information

The information in these sections should be current. The Town Website Committee periodically reviews these sections in an effort to update information. Since much of the material was originally obtained from groups and organizations in Town, it is incumbent on these sources to review their information and keep it current. Updated information should be sent to community@topsfield-ma.gov.

Frequently Asked Questions

FAQs are a great way to get information to people. Suggestions for additional FAQs should be sent to community@topsfield-ma.gov.

Text Search

A recent enhancement is a text search capability of the Town website. To recommend documents to add for reference, contact community@topsfield-ma.gov. Potential material includes:

- Town Annual Report
- Annual Town Meeting Warrants and Meeting Minutes
- Community Preservation Act
- Open Space Plan

Town Issue Debate

In an effort to provide voters with easy to digest information about local issues, the idea of a Town Issue Debate may be used. The concept is to use Cable TV and the Town Website resources to educate people about a significant issue facing the town. Both Pro and Con positions will be presented in a debate format on Channel 10. A Moderator will control the debate based on an established format. The Town Website can be used to post additional material such as text documents, images or PowerPoint presentations. Information submitted by Topsfield residents may be placed on the Community Forum page, at the discretion of the Website Committee. (See Disclaimer and Privacy Policy posted on the Town Website for additional information.)